



# Department of Justice

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## **FORMER IT TECHNICIAN SENTENCED TO JAIL FOR COMPUTER INTRUSION**

Tampa, Florida - U.S. Attorney Robert E. O'Neill announces that U.S. District Judge Susan C. Bucklew today sentenced Patricia Marie Fowler (age 30, of Palmetto), the former Information Technology (IT) Technician for the Suncoast Community Health Centers (SCHC) located in Ruskin, Florida, to 18 months in federal prison for committing computer intrusions causing damage of at least \$17,000. The court also ordered Fowler to pay restitution of \$17,243.01 and to be placed on supervised release for three years after serving her sentence of confinement.

Fowler was found guilty by a federal jury on September 2, 2010 of computer intrusions causing damage of over \$5,000 to SCHC, a non-profit federally qualified community health center providing medical services to patients without access to primary healthcare and without regard to their ability to pay.

According to trial testimony, Fowler had been fired by SCHC on March 13, 2009, for insubordination and failing to follow the orders of her supervisors. On March 17, SCHC employees discovered that a computer intrusion had occurred and that damage had been done to the SCHC computer system. From March 17, 2009 through April 1, 2009 numerous unauthorized intrusions were made into the SCHC computer system which

resulted in the deletion and movement of files from the computers of SCHC executives, changing of administrative account names and passwords, removing access to infrastructure systems, changing pay and accrued leave rates on the employee payroll system, and the compromise and lockout of the firewall used to secure the SCHC network.

On July 15, 2009, Fowler was interviewed by Special Agents of the FBI and after initially denying any culpability, she admitted to committing the computer intrusion crimes against SCHC and provided the agents with the password to the firewall which she had changed.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Donald L. Hansen, the Computer Technology Crimes Coordinator for the Tampa Division.